



## **Request for Information and Qualifications Transit Consulting Services**

### **Introduction/Proposal for Transit Consulting Services**

The Woodlands Township is requesting proposals from qualified firms and individuals who are interested in providing transit consulting and transit management services for park and ride and trolley programs within The Woodlands Township. This Request for Information and Qualifications provides background on The Woodlands Township and services it provides. Interested parties should submit proposals to the Township no later than January 15, 2014 at 5 p.m. (Central Time).

### **The Woodlands Township-Background Information**

The Woodlands Township is one of the fastest growing residential and employment centers in the greater Houston-Galveston region. With a current population of over 106,000, the Township's residential population at build out is expected to be approximately 130,000. The Woodlands is also experiencing explosive growth in retail and office development in the Town Center and outlying areas. This accelerated growth is creating mobility and congestion challenges primarily within The Woodlands Town Center.

The Woodlands Township is a special purpose district, political subdivision of the State of Texas located in unincorporated areas of Montgomery and Harris Counties. The Township is authorized to collect sales tax, room tax and property tax, and provides a wide range of municipal types of services. These services are considered value-added services since they are enhancements to basic service levels provided by the other governmental organizations, such as the County. The Woodlands Township is governed by a seven-member fully elected Board of Directors that meets twice each month to conduct the business of the Township.

On October 1, 2012, The Woodlands Township, the City of Conroe and parts of unincorporated Montgomery County were included in a new large urbanized area (UZA) formed by the U.S. Census Bureau. The Woodlands Township and the City of Conroe were named as dual designated recipients for Federal Transit Administration (FTA) and State of Texas grant funds for the Conroe-Woodlands large urbanized area (UZA). By agreement, the Township is responsible

for the performance and financial viability of public transit operations for the southern portion of the UZA and the City of Conroe is responsible for the northern portion of the UZA.

The Township, as an FTA designated recipient, oversees public transit within the UZA through operating agreements with the Brazos Transit District (BTD). BTD provides transit operation and maintenance services for the transit services provided by the Township which include:

- A park and ride operation that operates from three community locations with 33 contract buses providing round trip transportation from the Township to certain Houston employment centers. Approximately 1500+ riders per day use this service, which is currently contracted by BTD with First Class Tours. Users are charged a fee for this service.
- A Town Center trolley operation consisting of two trolleys providing “free” transportation service to business locations in the Town Center. This service operates daily from 11 a.m. to 8 p.m. and offers service in the Town Center.
- A Waterway Cruiser operation consisting of six passenger boats. These boats provide public transportation and special event services along The Woodlands Waterway. Riders are charged a fee for this service which operates up to three days per week.

The Township is currently working with the Houston–Galveston Area Council (H-GAC) to complete a comprehensive transit and mobility plan study for The Woodlands and The Woodlands Town Center area. This H-GAC-led study is expected to be completed by 2014. The selected transit consultant will provide input and recommendation on final plan implementation.

### **Timeline and Selection Process**

Interested parties are required to submit their letters of interest and qualifications no later than 5 p.m. on January 15, 2014. Evaluations will be completed by January 17, 2014 and a recommendation will be submitted for Township Board consideration on January 22, 2014.

### **Proposal to Meet FTA Procurement Requirements**

Firms submitting proposals must assure that their proposal will meet all FTA requirements for federal grant reimbursement. All submitting firms must be prequalified consultant firms per the Houston–Galveston Area Council Plan Source purchase program or provide assurances that the submitting firm meets all FTA procurements regulations and guidelines as specified by FTA for selecting transit consultants.

## **Schedule and Budget**

The term of the agreement shall run for a twelve-month period from February 1, 2014 to January 31, 2015. The price submitted shall be submitted based on time and materials with a not to exceed fixed fee cost.

The transit consultant will submit monthly progress reports with invoices for work performed in the billing period. The billings by consultant will be based on actual time and materials for work effort on a monthly basis.

The consultant recognizes that the Township will be retaining in-house staff and many of the tasks included in the Scope of Services Tasks 1-3 will be assumed by Township staff. This transition of scope of services tasks 1-3 from the consultant to Township staff is expected to occur over the contract period.

## **Submittal of Letters of Interest and Qualifications**

All proposals must be submitted to the President/General Manager's office no later than 5 p.m. on January 15, 2014. Proposals received after that time and date will not be opened.

The proposals should be submitted to:

President/General Manager, c/o Karen Dempsey,  
The Woodlands Township  
2801 Technology Forest Drive  
The Woodlands, Texas, 77381

Email submittals can be submitted to [kdempsey@thewoodlandstownship-tx.gov](mailto:kdempsey@thewoodlandstownship-tx.gov).

Proposals may be mailed or hand delivered. Proposals submitted via email will be accepted; however, The Woodlands Township will not be responsible for any delays in transmission or filtering programs that may cause electronic submissions to not be received. It is the responsibility of the responder to ensure that the proposal(s) is received by the date and the time specified. All costs incurred in the preparation of a proposal responding to this request will be the responsibility of the responder and will not be reimbursed by The Woodlands Township.

All timely proposals will be reviewed by staff and a recommendation will be forwarded to the Ad Hoc Transportation Committee and the Township Board of Directors. The Township Board is

expected to consider the recommendation at their meeting on January 22, 2014. The contract start date will be February 1, 2014.

### **Required Submittals**

The Township is interested in receiving the following information as part of the proposal:

- Information about the firm/size and history.
- Past projects that have been undertaken by the firm.
- Resumes of individuals that will be assigned to The Woodlands Township project (including subcontractors, if any).
- Identify the lead consultant that will serve as the point of contact for The Woodlands Township
- References for past work.
- Pricing based on scope of work (please provide per separate submittal).

### **Statement of Work**

The Woodlands Township is seeking a Transit Consultant to perform management, analytical, and technical duties in support of transit programming and planning, coordination, and operation of public transit activities within the Township. The Township will accept letters of interest and qualifications from experienced individuals and organizations who have been prequalified under the Houston–Galveston Area Council Plan Source program. These submittals will be reviewed and a selected firm will be recommended to the Township Board for final negotiations under the Plan Source process.

The Township has delineated the 2014 Scope of Services below that outline the scope of work that a transit consultant will be expected to provide The Woodlands Township. The work to be performed includes, but is not limited to:

### **Scope of Services:**

#### **Task 1 – Transit Program Coordination**

##### **Task 1A – Transit Activities**

- Work with The Woodlands Township (Township) staff on various committees affecting mobility in the Township including Township Ad Hoc Transportation Committee and others as required.
- Provide annual reports of transit performance data including ridership, passenger miles, air quality data and related statistics required by H-GAC for its emissions plans.

- Assist in development of yearly Programming of Projects required by H-GAC related to all transit capital, operating and planning activities in the UZA and ensure The Woodlands Township projects are included in the Regional Transportation Plan.
- Support development of responses to H-GAC, TxDOT, FTA or other governmental entities with inquiries related to the provision of transit services in the Township portion of the UZA.
- Coordinate with non-profit transit providers in The Woodlands area to provide effective demand response services for The Woodlands UZA area.

#### Task 1B – Administrative Duties of the Large Urban Area

*(Task 1B will be done in conjunction with the City of Conroe and other stakeholders of the Conroe–Woodlands UZA)*

Work with the City of Conroe, Montgomery County and other stakeholders of the UZA on behalf of The Woodlands Township to maintain open communication and dialogue related to transit system performance, transit capital and operating needs, coordinating future transit planning activities, forecasting future financial resources and maintaining transit activities in the UZA and Transit Advisory Committee (as described in the Interlocal Agreement between The Woodlands Township and the City of Conroe).

- Assist with the preparation of agenda, supporting materials, record-keeping and coordination of quarterly stakeholder meetings for the UZA Transit Advisory Committee.
- Work with the Township (and the City of Conroe) in development of annual letter to H-GAC detailing the split of funding allocation of federal transit funds for each stakeholder entity of the UZA. Ensure that yearly sub allocations from FTA and TxDOT of transit and mobility funds are distributed in a timely manner to the stakeholders of the UZA.
- Support Township staff on interactions with other regional transit providers including Houston METRO, Harris County Transit District, Brazos Transit District, and others.

#### Task 2 – Transit Program Compliance

##### Task 2A – Update and Maintain Existing Compliance Documents

- Work with the Township to develop transit operating plan for the Trolleys, Waterway Cruisers and Woodlands Express for review and approval by H-GAC and FTA.
- Develop financial capacity analysis for the Township that demonstrates ability to operate transit services at current levels and sustain operations into the future. Effort continues the 5-year Transit Plan of Township.

#### Task 2B – National Transit Database (NTD) Reporting Oversight

- Work with Township staff and transit provider(s) to ensure maintenance and organization of all relevant data that is required by FTA for annual NTD updates.
- Consultant will provide support to Township staff to ensure that all data is reported correctly to governmental bodies to result in maximum return through federal funding each year.

#### Task 2C – Federal Compliance Review Preparation

- Maintain a file of all compliance plans, financial documentation, and procurement history reporting compliance to be used for future Triennial Reviews.
- Assist Township staff with single-year financial audits as conducted by Township policy related to government grant funds.
- Assist on random Financial Management Oversight audits conducted by FTA to ensure proper compliance and reporting.

### Task 3 – Grant Management and Reporting

#### Task 3A – Ongoing Grant Management

This task will cover ongoing reporting requirements for each of the Township's active grants.

- Work with FTA and Township staff to provide information relative to project activities, budget updates and grant amendments as necessary.
- Complete Progress Reports and Federal Financial Reports on all grant line items quarterly as required by FTA.
- Provide timely budget revision requests to FTA for grants as necessary.

#### Task 3B – DBE Compliance Reports

- Work with Township staff, transit provider(s) and construction contractor(s) to maintain records of all DBE subcontractor hours and activity.
- Complete semiannual DBE Reports as required by FTA for all transit-related expenditures of federal and local funding.

#### Task 3C – ECHO Draw Support

- Work with Township staff to correctly calculate and document all reimbursements of local expenditures with federal grant funds.
- Advise Township staff on draws from the ECHO system from federal grants to reimburse local expenditures.
- Create and maintain a system of documentation to track all local expenditures, grant disbursements and eligible overmatch to be used in future grants.

#### Task 4 – Transit Planning

##### Task 4A – Existing Transit Program Oversight

- Review monthly ridership.
- Review monthly invoices from BTD.
- Provide quarterly evaluations of system-wide performance.
- Provide summary analyses for Township Board review as requested.
- Participate in biweekly telephone conferences with Township staff and Brazos representatives regarding operational issues and concerns

##### Task 4B – Identify Service Expansion and Efficiency Opportunities

- Work with transit provider to make recommendations to Township staff related to transit service expansion for the transit systems in the Township.
- Work with the transit provider to make recommendations to Township staff regarding opportunities to improve the efficiency of transit services through route changes, reduced service hours, administrative changes and related management assistance.

##### Task 4C – Transit Provider(s) Interface with Township Staff

- Work with staff of transit provider(s) and Township to ensure coordination of information and timely response to issues.
- Support oversight on quality assurance and provision of transit services to the stakeholders of the Township.
- Ensure that rider satisfaction and on-time performance surveys are administered regularly and issues are properly addressed.

#### Task 4D – RFP/RFQ Process and Documentation Review

- Work with TWT staff and transit provider(s) on document development, advertisement and procedural steps for all RFPs and RFQs related to the TWT federal transit park and ride program
  - o Develop RFP for the purchase of new coaches and partial turnkey operator for Woodlands Express.
  - o Develop RFP for a full turnkey operation
  - o The RFP for either option should allow implementation of a new contract provider by April, 2015
- Ensure that all FTA procurement guidelines are met and properly documented throughout the process.
- Maintain a file on each procurement that will satisfy FTA auditors in future Triennial Reviews.

#### Task 5 – Capital Project Development and Oversight

##### Task 5A – Support Existing FTA Related Agreements

- Support needs of the Township related to existing agreements between BTDC and The Woodlands Development Company that relate to federally funded capital infrastructure including park-and-ride lots, Transit Corridors and Town Center pedestrian infrastructure, etc.
- Work with the Township to implement the recommendations of the Township Transit Study anticipated to be completed in 2014.

##### Task 5B – Design Process and Construction Management Oversight (if needed)

- Support drafting RFQ/RFP for federally funded construction projects, as necessary, to ensure all documentation meets FTA guidelines.
- Assist Township staff in managing bid procedures including public advertisements, pre-bid meetings, bid openings, bid awards and similar activities.



- As necessary, ensure compliance during construction phase of projects including field interviews of workers to ensure Davis-Bacon wage rate compliance, documentation of certified payrolls and DBE reporting, review and coordination of change-orders, attending periodic construction update meetings, etc.

#### Task 5C – Coordination with Private Developers

- As requested by the Township, work with business interests and private-sector developers on the interface of their projects with public transportation and other federally-funded initiatives of the Township.
- Identify opportunities to capture local match from private development that can be used to alleviate local cash requirements of the Township.

### **Right to Reject**

The Woodlands Township reserves the right to reject any and all proposals received in response to this Request for Interest and Qualifications. The Township reserves the right to contract with and / or secure transit consulting services from other transit consultants as deemed necessary by the Township. This Request in no manner obligates The Woodlands Township to pursue any contractual relationship with any entity that responds to the Request. The Township further reserves the right to cancel this Request for Interest and Qualifications at any time if deemed to be the best interest of the Township.